Here begynneth the chorle and the byrde.

Problemes of olde lykenes & fygures.
Whiche pu[illegible]n fructuo⁹ of sētence
And auct[illegible]s groūded on scrypturs
By res[illegible]nce of notable apparence
with moralytes cōcludyge on prudēce
Lyke as the [illegible]ble reherseth by wrytynge
[illegible] chose them somtyme a kynge

Fyrst in theyr chose they named the olyue
To reygne amonge them (Judiciū) doth expresse
But he hym selfe gan excuse belyue
He myght not forsake his tatrenesse
Ne the fygge tree his amerous swetnesse
Ne the vyne his holsome tarage
Whiche gyueth comforte to all maner aege

And semblably poetes laureate
By derke parables full conuenyent
Fayne that byrdes and beestes of estate
As ryall egles and lyons by assente
Sente out wryttes to holde a parlayment
And made decrees bryefly for to say
Some to haue lordshyp and some to obeye

Egles in the ayre hyghest make theyr flyght
Power of lyons on the grounde is sene
Cedre amonge trees hyghest is of syght
And the laurere of nature is aye grene
Of floures all Flora aye goddesse and quene

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Thus of all thynges there ben dyuersytees
Some of estate and some of lowe degrees

Poetes wryte wonderfull lyknes
And vnder couerte kepe them selfe close
They take bestes and foules to wytnes
Of whose faynynge fables fyrst arose
And here I call to my purpose
Out of frenshe a tale to translate
Whiche in a paunflete I redde and sawe late

This tale whiche I make of mencyon
In grose reherced playnly to declare
Thre prouerbes payed for a raunson
Of a byrde whiche was take in a snare
Wonder desyrous to scape fro her care
Of myn auctours folowynge the procesle
So as it befell in order I shall expresle

Somtyme there was a small byllage
As myn auctour maketh rehercayle
A chorle whiche had luste and grete courage
Within hymselfe by delygent trauayle
To make a gardyn of ryche entayle
Of length and brede lyke square and longe
Hedged and dytched to make it sure & stronge

All the aleys were made playne with londe
The benche couered with newe turues grene

Swete herbes with conduytes at the honde
That wyll it vp agayne the sonne shene
Lyke syluer stremes as crystall clene
The burbyll wayes in theyr vp boylynge
Rounde as beryll the bemes out shewynge

Wydde in the gardyn stode a freshe lauryre
Theron a byrde syngynge daye and nyght
With shynynge fethers bryghter than golde wyre
Whiche with her songe made heuy hertes lyghe
That to beholde it was an heuenly syght
How towarde euen and in the dawenynge
She dyde her payne mooste amerously to synge

Esperus enforced strongely her courage
Towarde euen whan Phebus gan to west
Amonge the braunches to her auauntage
To synge her complyne and than go to rest
And at rysynge of quene Alceste
To synge agayne as it was her dewe
Erly on morowe the daye sterre to salewe

It was a very heuenly melodye
Euen and morne to here the byrdes songe
And the swete sugred armonye
Of vncoute werblys and tewnes drawe alonge
That all the gardyn of the noyse ronge
Tyll on morowe whan Tytan shone clere
This byrde was trapped & caught with a pantere

The chorle was glad whan he this byrde had take
Mery of chere of loke and of vysage
And in all haste he purposed to make
Within his house a lytell preaty cage
And with her songe to reioyse his courage
Tyll at the laste the sely byrde abrayd
And soberly thus to the chorle she sayd

I am nowe take and stande vnder dangere
Holden streyght that I may not flee
A dieu my songe and all my notes clere
Nowe that I haue loste my lybertee
Now am I thrall where somtyme I was free
And truste well whyle that I am in dystresse
I can not synge nor make no gladnesse

And though my cage forged were of golde
And the pynacles of berell and crystall
I remembre a prouerbe sayd of olde
Who leseth his fredome forsoth he leseth all
For I had leuer vpon a braunche small
Merely to synge amonge the wodes grene
Than in a cage of syluer bryght and shene

Songe in pryson hath none accordaunce
Trowest thou that I wyll synge in pryson
Songe procedeth of Ioye and pleasaunce
And pryson causeth deth and destruccyon
Ryngynge of keters is no mery sowne

Or how sholde he be gladde or Jocounde
Ayayne his wyll that lyeth in chaynes bounde

What auayleth it a lyon to be kynge
Of beests all shette in a toure of stone
Or an egle vnder skreyte keppynge
Called also kynge of fowles euerychone
Fye on lordshyppe whan lyberte is gone
Answere herto lette it not a sherte
Who syngeth merely & syngeth not at herte

And yf thou wylte reioyse of my syngynge
Lette me go fle ferre frome all daungere
And euery daye in the mornynge
I shall repayre vpon thy laurere
And freshely synge with lusty notes clere
Under thy chambre or afore thyne halle
Euery season whan thou lyst me call

To be shytte vp and pynned vnder dede
Nothynge accordeth vnto my nature
Though I were fed with mylke & wastell brede
And with cruddes brought to my pasture
Yet had I leuer to do my besy cure
Erly on morowe to scrape in the vale
To synde my dyner amonge the wormes smale

The labourer is gladder at the plough
Erly on morowe to feede hym on bacon

Than some man is that hath good ynough
And all deyntes plente and foyson
And hath no fredome with his possessyon
To go at large but as a bere at a stake
To passe his bondes but yf he leue take

Take this answere for a full conclusyon
To synge in pryson ÿ shalte not me constrayne
Tyll I haue fredome in wodes vp and downe
To flee at large on bowes rough and playne
And of reason thou sholdest not dysdayne
Of my desyre but laughe and haue game
But who is a chorle he wold eche mā were ÿ same

Well quod the chorle lyth it wyll not be
That I desyre as by thy talkynge,
Maugre thy wyll thou shalte chese of thre
Within a cage merely to synge
Or to the kechyne I shall thy body brynge
Pull thy fethers that be bryght and clere
And after rost or bake the to my sopere

Than sayd the byrde to reason lay I not nay
Touchynge my longe a full answere thou hast
And whan my fethers plucked ben awaye
And my body rosted or baken in a paast
Thou shalte of me haue a small repaast
But and thou wylte werke by my counceyll
Thou mayst by me haue a grete auayll

Yf thou wylte to my reason assent
And suffre me go freely frome pryson
Without raunson or ony other rente
I shall the ryue a notable guardon
Thre grete wysdoms accordynge to reason
Moze of value take hede what I profre
Than all the golde that shytte is in thy cofre

Truste me well I shall the not dysceyue
Well sayd the chorle tell anone lette se
Nay sayd the byrde thou must afore conceyue
Who shall teche of reason must go fre
It sytteth a mayster to haue his lyberte
And at large to teche his lesson
Haue me not suspecte I meane no treason

Well sayd the chorle I holde me contente
I truste thy promyse that thou hast made to me
The byrde flewe forth the chorle was of assent
And toke her flyght vpon the laurer tree
Than thought she thus nowe stande I free
With snares & panters I purpose not my lyue
Ne with no lyme twygges ony moze to stryue

He is a fole that scapedis fro daungere
And hath broke his feters & fledde out of pryson
Agayne to reforte/brent chylde dredeth fyre
Eche man beware by wysdome and reason
Suger strawed that hydeth false poyson

There is no venym so perylous of sharpnesse
As whan it hath of tryacle the lykenesse

Who dredeth no peryll in peryll he shall falle
Smoth waters ben oftyme depe,
The quayle pype can moost falsly calle
Tyll the quayle vnder the nette doth crepe
A bleré eyed fowler truste not though he wepe
Eschewe his thombe of weppynge take none hede
That smale byrde can nype by the hede

And now that I suche daungere am eschaped
I wyll beware and for a prouyde
That of no fowler I wyll nomore be Japed
Fro theyr lyme twygges I wyll fleefer a syde
Where peryll is peryll is to abyde
Cõme nere thou chorle and herke to my speche
Of thre wysedomes that I shall the teche

Yeue not of wysedome to hastely credence
To euery tale ne to euery tydynge
But conceyue of reason and of prudence
Amonge many tales in many a lesynge
Hastely credence hath caused grete hyndrynge
Reporte of tales and tydynges tolde of newe
Maketh many a man to beholde vntrews

For one parte take this for my raunson
Lerne the seconde grounded on scrypture

Delyte not thou by no condycyon
Thynge whiche is Impossyble to recure
Worldly delyces stonde all in auenture
And who delyzeth to clymbe hyghe a lofte
By sodayne tourne falleth ofte vnsofte

The thyrde is this beware bothe eue and morowe
Forgete it not but lerne this of me
For treasour lost make neuer to grete sorowe
Whiche in no wyse may recouered be
For who sorroweth for lolle in that degre
Reken fyrst his lolle and after his payne
Of one sorowe he maketh sorowes twayne

After this lesson the byrde began a longe
Of her escape gretely reioysynge
And remembred her also of the wronge
Done by the chorle fyrst at her takynge
Of her affraye and of her prysonynge
Glad that she was at large and out of drede
Sayd to hym houynge aboue his heed

Thou were layd the a very naturell fole
To suffre me departe of thy lewdnes
Thou oughtes of ryght complayne & make dole
And in thyn herte to haue grete heuynes
That thou hast lost so pallynge grete ryches
Whiche myght suffyse by value in rekenynge
To paye the raunson of a myghty kynge

There is a stone whiche called is a Jagonce
Of olde engendred within myn entrayll
Whiche of fyne golde peyseth an vnce
Cytryne of colour lyke garnettes of entayll
Whiche maketh men victorious in batayll
And who so euer bere on hym the stone
Is full assured agaynst his mortall fone

Who hath this stone in his possessyon
Shall suffre no pouerte ne none Indygence
But of all tresour haue plente and foyson
And euery man shall do hym reuerence
And enemye shall do hym none offence
But frome thyn hondes now that I am gone
Playne yf thou wylte for thy parte is none

It causeth loue it maketh men gracyous
And fauourable in euery mannes syght
It maketh accorde bytwene folkes enuyous
Comforteth sorowfull maketh heuy hertes lyght
Lyke topasyon of colour sonnysshe bryght
I am a fole to tell all at ones
Or teche a chorle the prysse of precyous stones

Men sholde not put a precyous margaryte
As rubyes saphyres and other stones of vnde
Emeraudes and other perles whyte
Afore rude swyne that loue drafe of kynde
For alowe delyteth as I fynde

More in dyaffe her pygges for to glade
Than in all the perry that cometh out of garnade

Eche thynge draweth to his semblable
Fyſſhes in the ſee Beſtes on the ſtronde
The ayer for foules by nature is couenable
And to the plough man for to tyll the londe
And to a chorle a dongforke in his honde
I leſe my tyme ony more to tary
For to tell a chorle of lapydary

That thou haddeſt thou getteſt nomore agayne
Thy lyme twygges and panters I dekye
To lette me go thou were foule ouer ſene
To leſe thy rychelle only of folye
I am nowe fre to ſynge and to flye
Where that me lyſte and he is a fole at all
That is at large and maketh hymſelfe thrall

To here of wyſdome thyne eeres ben halfe deef
Lyke an aſſe that lyſtneth on an harpe
Thou mayſt go pype on an yue leef
Better is to me to ſynge on thornes charpe
Than in a cage with a chorle to carpe
For it was ſayd of folkes yetes agone
A chorles chorle is ofte woo begone

The chorle felte his herte parte on tweyne
For very ſorowe and a ſonder ryue

Alas sayd he I may well wepe and playne
As a wratche neuer lyke to thryue
But for to endure in pouerte all my lyue
For of foly and of wylfulnes
I haue now loste all hole my ryches

I was a lorde I crye out on fortune
I had grete trasoure late in my keppynge
Whiche myght haue made me longe contynue
With that stone to haue lyued lyke a kynge
yf I had sette it in a rynge
Borne it vpon me. I had good ynoughe
I sholde than no more haue gone to the ploughe

Whan the byrde sawe the chorle thus morne
And how that he was heuy of his chere
She toke her flyght and gan agayne retorne
Towarde hym and sayd as ye shall here.
O dulle chorle wysedomes for to lere,
That I the taught all is lefte behynde
Racyd awaye and clene out of thy mynde

Taught I the not this wysedome in sentence
To euery tale brought to the of newe
Not to hastely gyue therto credence
Unto tyme thou knowe that it were trewe
All is not golde that sheweth golde sothe hewe
Nor stones all be nature as I fynde
Be not saphyrs that shewe colour ynde

In this doctryne I lost my labour
To teche the suche prouerbes of sustaunce
Now may thou see thy blynde errour
For all my body poysed in balaunce
Weyth not an vnce rude is thy remembraunce
I to haue more poyse cloysed in myn entrayll
Than all my body sette for the counteruayll

All my body weyth not an vnce
How myght than I in me haue a stone
That peyseth more than a Jagonce
Thy brayne is dulle thy wytte is almoost gone
Of thre wysdomes thou hast forgoten one
Thou sholdest not after my sentence
To euery tale to hastely gyue credence

I bad also beware bothe euen and morowe
For a thynge loste of sodayne auenture
Thou sholdest not make to moche sorowe
Whan thou seest thou mayst not it recure
And here thou kayest whiche doost thy cure
In thy snare to catche me agayne
Thou arte a fole thy labour is in vayne

In the thyrde thou doost craue
I bad thou sholdest in no maner wyse
Coueyte thynge that thou mayst not haue
In whiche thou hast forgone myne enprise
Than may I say playnly to deuyse

Thou hast of madnes forgoten all thye
Notable wyscomes that I taught the

The byntener treateth of holsom wynes
Of gentyll fruyte bosteth the gardyner
The fysther casteth out hokes and lynes
To catche fysshe in euery freshe ryuer
Of tylthe of londe treateth the bouer
The gentylman talketh of gentery
The chorle delyteth to speke of rybaudry

All one to the fawcone and a kyte
As good an owle as a popyngaye
A ducke of the donghylle as deynte as a snyte
Who serueth a chorle hath many a carefull daye
A deu syr chorle fayre well I fle my waye
I cast me neuer hens forth my lyuynge
To forge a chorle ony more to synge

Ye folke that shall this fable see or rede
Newe forged tales I counseyll you to fle
For losse of good take neuer grete hede
Be not sorowfull for none aduersyte
Coueyte nothynge that may not recouered be
And remembre where euer ye ryde or gone
A chorles chorle is alwaye woo begone

Unto purpose this prouerbe is full ryt
Redde and reported by olde remembraunce

A chyldes byrde and a knaues wyfe
Haue ofte syth grete sorowe and myschaunce
And who hath fredome hath all suffysaunce
Better is fredome with lytell in gladnes
Than to be thrall with all worldely ryches

Go lytell quayer and recommaunde me
Unto my mayster with humbly affeccyon
Beseche hym lowly of mercy and pyte
Of thy rude makynge to haue compassyon
And as touchynge thy translacyon
Out of Frensshe/how that it Englysshe be
All thynges is sayd vnder correccyon
With supportacyon of his benygnyte

A M E N

¶ Here endeth the chorle and the byrde. Enprynted at London in the Flete strete in the sygne of the sonne by Wynkyn de Worde.